



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **City of Santa Barbara**

Parks and Recreation

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **City Parks & Recreation Commission Recognizes Two Volunteer Groups at October Meeting**

At each monthly meeting, the Parks & Recreation Commission recognizes those community organization and individuals who have supported projects and programs of the Parks and Recreation Department with their time, treasure and/or talents. On Wednesday, October 26, the Commission recognized two separate efforts: the Sunrise Rotary, Roteract, and Bishop Diego Interact clubs and McConnell's Fine Ice Cream for the support of the 90-Plus Ice Cream Social and the Santa Barbara Country Dance Society for donating a restored Baldwin Ellington baby grand piano to the Carrillo Recreation Center's Ballroom.

Between 1985 and 2008, the Department hosted 22, "90-Plus" luncheons honoring local citizens aged 90 years and older. Over the years, the event grew from 25 guests to nearly 500. These events were suspended in 2009 due to staffing and funding limitations. After receiving many requests to restore this program, staff collaborated with local Rotary groups, McConnell's Fine Ice Cream and others to offer an ice cream social this past June in the newly renovated Carrillo Recreation Center's ballroom. Three Rotary groups served up ice cream, cake, and refreshments while guests were entertained with a program that included a Dixieland band, hula dancers, and visits by special guests. The Parks & Recreation Commission thanked McConnell's and the local Rotary clubs for their generous support of this year's 90-Plus event.

Prior to the recent renovation of the Carrillo Recreation Center, the ballroom's baby grand piano was in very poor shape. Since refurbishing the piano would likely cost more than the

value of the instrument, the old piano was among many items sent to auction in accordance with City policies.

After the facility renovation was completed, the Santa Barbara Country Dance Society investigated options to bring back a grand piano to the ballroom stage for use during the Sunday night Contra dances. After months of research, the Country Dance Society located a newly-restored, black Baldwin Ellington piano and financed \$7,000 for its purchase. The new piano is available for Parks & Recreation events and has been used at Contra Dances, the 90-Plus Ice Cream Social, and at a few Swing and Ballroom dances. The Parks & Recreation Commission recognized the generosity of the Santa Barbara Country Dance Society and thanked them for bringing this beautiful musical instrument to the Carrillo Ballroom for many to enjoy.

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